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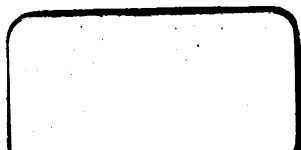
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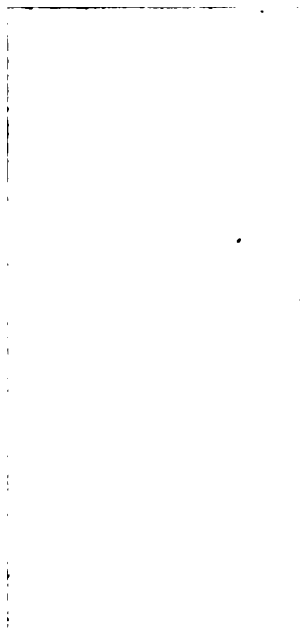
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141. d.
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THE
MARINER'S DELIVERANCE:

AN ADDRESS TO SEAMEN.

FOUNDED ON PSALM CVII., VERSES 23—32.

BY A WESLEYAN MINISTER.

"When by the dreadful tempest borne
High on the broken wave,
They know Thou art not slow to hear,
Nor impotent to save."



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PREFACE.

To the Christian mind it is a very gratifying fact, that within the last ten or twenty years considerable efforts have been made to promote the spiritual welfare of that class of men who are exposed to the dangers of the mighty deep. Several Sailors' Societies are now in active operation, the design of which is to diffuse among our seamen religious information. In many of our seaport-towns places of worship are set apart for their benefit; Ministers and Missionaries are appointed to watch over them; schools are established for the instruction of their children; and the sacred Scriptures, with other suitable publications, are circulated freely. The Wesleyan Seamen's Mission, for example, established a few years ago in London, and having for its special object the welfare of the many thousands who from time to time are

occupied on the river Thames,—that great artery of the trade of the metropolis,—is doing admirable service. We rejoice in this. Our seamen are eminently deserving of our sympathies. But, until a comparatively recent period, they have not secured that attention from the church which their peculiar circumstances demand. They were, at one time, almost outcasts from the fold of Christ, and no man seemed to care for their eternal interests. But the benevolent spirit of the Gospel has taught us better things; and never more, we trust, will the cause of the mariner be forgotten by the church of Christ.

It is also a source of satisfaction that these efforts have been attended with very great success. Many a sailor has become a man of prayer. Many a British ship now bears the Bethel flag. Many a little bark, and many a larger vessel, has been consecrated for Christ's service, and made a house of God. It is not improbable that some thousands of our seamen are now accustomed, on the Sabbath-day especially, when away upon the billows, far from Christian sanctuaries, and from all the sweet

endearments of their father-land, to worship Him whose presence is alike in every place; and not a few there are who hold secret fellowship with God, and know Him as their Father, reconciled through Jesus Christ. But there are multitudes of sailors who are still ignorant of the truth, and who, it is to be feared, are addicted to the very worst habits of prodigality and intemperance. What can be done to rescue them from a course of sin? Let the churches be more zealous in this cause than ever.

The following pages are addressed, in particular, to the more intelligent class of sailors, who in early life were favoured with some of the advantages of education, and who still retain a taste for reading, even amidst the active duties of a life at sea. Though nothing is advanced to which any mariner can object, yet it is admitted that the observations on natural phenomena, and some of the reasonings founded on them, may not be very well adapted to the circumstances of seamen generally. Most of our British sailors can, it is hoped, read the sacred Scriptures; but many of

them are comparatively unlettered men. For such, tracts written in a homelier style would, perhaps, be deemed more suitable. Still the writer trusts that no sailor would fail to derive some advantage from the perusal of these pages, as the above remark will apply only to some portions of them; and he purposes ere long to address the humbler class of mariners in a separate and shorter tract. Should it please the Author of all good to accompany the present effort with His blessing, and to render it the means of awakening the mind of any sailor to a sense of the importance of religion, the author will rejoice, and ascribe all praise to Him to whom all praise is due.

THE MARINER'S DELIVERANCE:

AN ADDRESS TO SEAMEN.

“The end is defeated and lost, for which this world was made and we placed in it, while we look not through things visible and made, unto Him that is invisible and unmade.”—HOWE.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

A DESIRE to promote your spiritual interests induces me to address you. You are secluded from several of the religious advantages possessed by many others; but the things of eternity are of the same importance to you as they are to those who can worship God in His sanctuary every Sabbath-day. You are not called to occupy the position which Providence has assigned you, because your eternal welfare is of less consequence than that of others; nor must you suppose that the peculiar circumstances of a life at sea exempt you from the

duty of making religion the great business of your lives. The plea sometimes set up by the sailor, that it is impossible *for him* to attend to the interests of his soul, and to honour God, is certainly invalid. The great Author of our being has placed no one in such a position as would render it impracticable to do those things which are right; and though some stations in society may be less favourable for the cultivation of piety than others, yet, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to every one who seeks it, the greatest difficulties may be removed, and the graces of the Christian character exemplified by every individual.

You are frequently prevented from engaging in the worship of the sanctuary; but you have opportunities for reading. And how suitable a book for the mariner is the word of God! It contains many passages which cannot fail to interest him, and it frequently alludes to his peculiar circumstances. The Bible is the sailor's book, and is the best companion he can have. How numerous are its promises applicable to his case!—how rich the consolation he may realise from its pages! Make it your study, my dear friends. Read a portion of it when-

ever you are able. Dwell upon its glorious truths, and especially on the facts which it records relative to the redemption of mankind. It is a mine of wealth,—it is a fountain of blessing,—it is an inexhaustible storehouse of happiness and peace.

Now, it is the object of these pages to direct your attention to a series of reflections on that very graphic description of the sailor's dangers and deliverances contained in the 107th Psalm. The passage is as follows:—

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven. O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works

to the children of men! Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders." (Verses 23—32.)

I.

At the time these words were penned, there must have been few persons, comparatively speaking, engaged in nautical pursuits; for the art of navigation was but very imperfectly understood. Even then, however, there were some; for when Solomon built the temple of Jerusalem, Hiram, King of Tyre, sent him timber from Mount Lebanon, which was conveyed by sea in floats to the place which Solomon appointed; (1 Kings v. 9;) and, at a somewhat later period, the Prophet Jonah went down to Joppa, (a seaport-town on the coast of Palestine, forty miles N. W. of Jerusalem,) to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord; where he found a ship going to Tarshish, in which he took a passage, with that object in view. To the storm that afterwards occurred, (Jonah i. 3—6,) some commentators suppose our psalm has reference, being not
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one of David's compositions, but written by a later author. Whether this opinion be correct or not, the book of Jonah furnishes evidence that a sea-faring life was not uncommon in those early times; and several other allusions to the fact are found in the Old-Testament Scriptures. Tarshish, indeed, must have been a very celebrated port. Its position has been a subject of much inquiry, and various opinions have been entertained respecting it. The most probable is, that it lay on the south-western coast of Spain; but, wherever it was situated, it was a place of considerable opulence, and of great commercial traffic. In the times of Solomon, the navy of Tharshish (Tarshish) came once in three years, "bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks:" (1 Kings x. 22:) and between it and Tyre there must have been a very extensive trade carried on; for of Tyre Ezekiel says, "The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market; and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas;" (Ezek. xxvii. 25;) and when Isaiah predicted the overthrow of Tyre, he cried, "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in." (Isaiah xxiii. 1.)

But the art of navigation was then in its infancy, nor did it make much progress for some centuries afterwards. In the New Testament we read of Christ and His disciples in a storm at sea, and of the eventful voyage of the Apostle Paul; but in the one case, it is the small lake of Gennesareth only that is referred to,—and in the other, it is the Mediterranean Sea, which, even as in earlier times, was traversed by crossing from island to island, or from one haven to another, without departing far away from land. The ships of those times were very differently constructed from the ships of modern days. They were but frail and slender barks, which sometimes required to be girded with cables to prevent their falling to pieces, through the violence of the waves. Sometimes they were impelled by sails, but very frequently by oars. The larger vessels were usually provided with a boat and several anchors; but they were by no means fitted to contend with the fury of the storm; and hence the ancients never ventured on a voyage in winter, but, during that season of the year, laid up their ships in some sheltered bay or harbour. (Acts xxvii. 12.)

It was reserved for modern enterprise and
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skill to launch away upon the boisterous main, —to brave the tempest, however furiously it raged,—and to make the sea a great highway for almost all the nations of the earth. Even the Carthaginians, the most maritime people of antiquity, did little more than skirt the coasts of Africa ; nor did either the Greeks or the Romans, in their naval expeditions, make much progress in the art of sailing. It was not until the fifteenth century that any one dared to venture on the broad Atlantic far from the sight of land ; but then the great discoverer of America undertook his enterprising voyage, and from that time navigation dates the commencement of a new era in its history. And it should never be forgotten, that to the improvements which have been made in that important art, we, as a people, are indebted for many of the comforts and conveniences of life, and for that higher state of civilisation and enlightenment for which we are distinguished. Great Britain has been designated the mistress of the seas ; and it is to the fact that her merchant-ships are found in every bay and harbour of the world, that she owes, to a very considerable extent, her elevated position among the nations of mankind. To distant or to nearer ports her

vessels are continually proceeding, and the British flag is waving at this moment in almost every latitude, from the tropics to the poles.

There was, doubtless, something daring in the spirit of the man who first ventured far on the bosom of the deep. Was it not presumptuous in so frail a creature to imagine that he might brave the boisterous sea?—and ought he not to have been satisfied with remaining nearer home? To this inquiry we reply,—God called him to the task, and destined him for its accomplishment. Can it for a moment be supposed that the ocean was intended to be a perpetual bar to the intercourse of nations? and that He who made it, made it to remain a trackless waste? We cannot think so. Man was certainly appointed to surmount the difficulties connected with exploring it; and though, for centuries, those difficulties were but very partially overcome, they at length gave way; and after the invention of that invaluable instrument, the mariner's compass, the seaman was able to extend his course upon the deep, and ultimately to circumnavigate the globe. Providence ordained all this. It was essential to the welfare of society at large, and essential to the progress of the human race, that so it

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should be. For otherwise, how could we have held intercourse with nations far away?—and how could distant lands, immersed in Heathenism, have been visited by the heralds of truth?—and how could barbarism and idolatry have ever been assailed, in order to their final overthrow? The navigation of the seas and oceans of our globe is requisite both for the temporal and spiritual benefit of mankind. Hence they that go down to the sea in ships *do business* in great waters. Duty calls them there. They are there by the appointment of a superintending Providence. They go, not to gratify their curiosity merely, or to display their bravery and skill, but to promote the interests of their fellow-men.

Of this fact it is, perhaps, necessary that the sailor should sometimes be reminded. At first, he probably made choice of a seaman's life. He was young, and bold, and enterprising, and he preferred the employment of a mariner to that of any other class of men. But now, it may be, he is a husband and a father, and he feels it no small task to bid adieu, for weeks and months together, to all that home calls dear,—to step on board the vessel that shall bear him from his friends,—and to expose

himself to dangers, which, for aught he knows, may prove fatal to his life. But is it not a cheering thought to you, my friend, that you are in the path of duty when you enter on your voyage?—that, whilst upon the sea, you are serving your generation according to the will of God? If you are a Christian, this simple fact cannot fail to give you consolation. In the recollection of it, you will be able confidently to commend yourself to the protecting care of Heaven. God has promised to keep you in all your ways; and since, when you venture on the mighty deep, you do not leave your providential path, you may indulge the hope that He will keep you there. No absolute assurance is given us, I admit, that the sailor shall always be preserved in danger,—as neither is there any absolute assurance that any class of men, whether their business is on the land or on the sea, shall be exempt from peril and from sudden death; but there are many promises which assure us of the ever-watchful guardianship of Heaven over those that honour God, and we know that nothing can befall them, wherever they may be, but by His permission. “He shall give His angels charge concerning thee.” “The angel of the Lord

encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." "The very hairs of your head are all numbered."

I know a little of the grief and bitterness experienced by the sailor, when about to leave his home ; and I know something, too, of the deep distress which, at the hour of parting, is often felt by his family and friends ; but I also know that a rich source of consolation will be found in acknowledging, at such a season, the providence of God in appointing us our lot ; and I would earnestly advise the mariner to recognise that Providence, and never to leave his family without collecting them together, if possible, and in solemn prayer commending both himself and them to the merciful protection of the Lord of all. The influence of such an act upon his mind cannot but be beneficial. He will be able to depart with greater confidence, and, stepping on the deck of his vessel with a peaceful mind, he will unfurl his sails and spread them to the breeze with buoyant spirits, hoping for a safe return. And whatever the result may be, this committing of himself into the hands of God is both a duty and a privilege. Even should the sailor meet with shipwreck, and never be permitted to see

his family again, the recognition of God's providence, prior to his departure, will secure for him the richest blessings; for "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." (Psalm xxxii. 10.)

II.

THE Psalmist, in the passage under consideration, alludes to the wonders which the sea presents. Now, though it may appear unnecessary to advert to these in addressing persons who are familiar with them, yet I venture to do so, in order to impress upon their minds the fact that they are the *wonders of the Lord*, and thus, of leading them to Him who presides over universal nature, and demands the homage of every creature under heaven. Nor do I speak of them from mere report. It has been my lot to cross the great Atlantic, and to spend twelve or fourteen weeks together on the deep blue sea. With some of the wonders which the mariner beholds, I am therefore partially acquainted; and often, in the contemplation

of them, I have been filled with astonishment and awe.

And first, there is the sea itself : it is wonderful, as we view it from the shore. Who can look upon its foamy billows as they dash upon the beach, and listen to its solemn roar, and watch the flowing and the ebbing of its tides, without emotion? The grandeur of the scene must impress every thoughtful mind; and the phenomenon of the tides especially, so regular and exact, can scarcely fail to lead any but the most sceptical to recognise the wisdom and the power of Him who has "shut up the sea with doors," and said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." (Job xxxviii. 8, 11.) But it is when you launch away upon its crested billows, and especially when you enter on the wide Atlantic, that the sea presents itself in all its glory. When far away from land, and nothing but an horizon of water can be seen, though you stretch your sight to the very furthest verge, some idea of the *vastness* of the ocean may be formed; and when you plunge into it your line and plummet, and find, in many instances, that you cannot fathom it, some faint conception of its *depth* arises in your

mind. The Atlantic is said to cover an area of 25,000,000 square miles, and in some parts of it a line 27,600 feet in length has not reached the bottom. The Pacific is still greater in extent; its area, including that of the Indian Ocean, being 70,000,000 square miles; whilst its depth is so profound, that a line five miles in length has been, in some places, insufficient to reach the bottom. How impressive, in connexion with these facts, is the appeal of God to Job: "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?" There is something in the vastness of the ocean, independently of other circumstances connected with it, which is calculated to fill the mind with elevated views of the Creator.

The *restlessness* of the sea is wonderful. It is perpetually in motion. Such is the influence of currents, tides, and winds, that it is continually moving in one way or in another. Even in the most perfect calm, it is not absolutely at rest, but heaves with a gentle undulation, the result, perhaps, of a by-gone storm. It is by this means that the healthiness of the ocean is secured; for otherwise it would in all probability begin to exhale noxious

vapours, and so be utterly unfit either to sustain the lives of the creatures that inhabit it, or to be traversed by the enterprising mariner. Its *colour*, too, whether real or illusive,—in some instances a perfect blue, in others green, and in others again red or varied as the rainbow, and occasioned frequently by reflection and refraction, but often by the presence of vegetable substances, or of myriads of infusoria,—is another phenomenon to excite our wonder. How astonishing, too, is its *saltiness*! This (we are told by philosophers) varies in different parts of the ocean, and in different seas. There is more salt in the Atlantic Ocean than in the Pacific, and more in the southern hemisphere than in the northern. “Deep seas,” says Mrs. Somerville, “are more saline than those that are shallow; and inland seas communicating with the main are less salt, from the rivers that flow into them: to this, however, the Mediterranean is an exception, occasioned by the great evaporation, and the influx of salt currents from the Black Sea and the Atlantic. The water in the Straits of Gibraltar, at the depth of 670 fathoms, is four times as salt as that at the surface.” The saltiness of the sea is the cause of its greater

specific gravity; and it, also, prevents the accumulation in it of putrid and offensive matter.

Then there are the *currents* of the sea. These are wonderful. Of the principal currents, one continually sweeps along from the poles to the equator; and another, which is ascribed to the agency of the trade-winds, flows within certain latitudes from east to west, at a mean velocity of ten miles per day. In addition to these, (which here and there branch off in various directions,) there are many secondary currents; —some periodical, others constant; some flowing on the surface of the sea, others, which are called under-currents, considerably beneath it. Currents are in the sea what rivers are on land. But they are, in some instances, longer, broader, and deeper than all the rivers in the world. It has been ascertained that one of them is from 150 to 200 miles in breadth. When currents meet, they occasion (as the mariner who has sailed round the Cape of Good Hope well knows) a considerable swell upon the waters, and, in a storm, cause great commotion, so that the waves seem, literally, almost mountains high.

Now, can any one go down to the sea in
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ships, and become acquainted with these wonders, and yet fail to recognise the power of God? Does a view of the ocean encourage scepticism? Can you calmly contemplate the works that you behold when on the deep, and entertain the thought that they had no Creator? You will meet, perhaps, with writers who give you astonishing descriptions of the scenes exhibited in nature,—descriptions the most beautiful, accurate, and philosophical,—which you cannot read without experiencing a measure of intellectual enjoyment, but in which you will find no recognition of a Great First Cause; and in which nature itself is idolised as God, and a species of refined pantheism is made to take the place of that sublime system of religion which revelation teaches. But whilst we may admire the productions of such writers, for the striking delineations they contain of the visible creation,—for the accounts they furnish of the physical world and of the laws that govern it, and often for the poetic language in which their authors clothe the sentiments they utter,—we must reject the principles they develop, and still adhere to those which lead us to a Great First Cause. And, certainly, when we turn from human descriptions of the

works of nature, to reflect upon those works themselves, it is impossible rationally to conclude either that they existed always, or that they are the product of the operation of some mysterious laws independent of a Lawgiver, or of a contriving Mind. It is God's sea, brave mariner, on which you sail. He made it; He holds it in the hollow of His hands; He controls its mighty waters, and directs its rolling waves. Whether it is smooth as glass, or just rippled by the breeze, or raised into mountains that threaten to overwhelm you, it tells you of a God, and bids you fear Him; it speaks to you of your Creator, and commands you to obey Him.

And there are other wonders witnessed at sea, equally astonishing to those already named. What an imposing spectacle do the starry heavens frequently present! What brilliant scenes, again, are often witnessed in the rising and the setting of the sun! I have sometimes seen the orb of day ascending in the east, as though he were actually rising up out of the waters; and as his beauteous beams have darted upward to the sky, and gradually dispersed the morning mist, I have thought of the rising of the Sun of righteousness, whose still more

glorious rays spread light and gladness through the world, and will eventually dispel the gloom of ignorance which rests upon the human mind. But still more magnificent is the setting of the sun at sea. You have probably witnessed the scene, at the close of some bright day, within the tropics; and with the brilliant crimson hues—bright as a flame of fire—with which that glorious luminary has been surrounded, you have almost been enraptured. The sailor has, frequently, an eye for such scenes; and it is well he has: but let him here, again, acknowledge that these wonders are the wonders of the Lord.

The *productions* of the sea are wonderful. There are “things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts,”—and “there is that leviathan whom God has made to play therein;” and “these all wait upon Him, that He may give them their meat in due season.” (Psalm civ. 25—27.) The sea teems both with vegetable and animal life; and the varieties of living forms that exist therein are, it would seem, all but infinite. It would be impossible to enumerate those which naturalists have collected, and probably there are myriads more which have never yet been seen. Sometimes your vessels

will pass through quantities of sea-weed of one species or another, extending over many miles; at other times the monsters of the deep will sport around your bark, and follow it for several days; and, again, multitudes of smaller fish will often travel in your track. And who has not observed, in traversing the ocean, a brilliant and dazzling light playing round the ship; the eddying waves foaming with brightness, and a trace as of fire, visible mostly at night, left along the path which she has steered? This singular phenomenon is attributed chiefly to phosphorescent matter, or to the existence of numerous phosphorescent animalcula, and is, perhaps, one of the most astonishing displays of nature's skill which the sea presents, striking the beholder with the highest admiration. But shall we say of *nature's* skill? No; but rather of the Eternal Mind. We pity the individual, and should give him credit for but a small degree of wisdom, who, in all these wonders, can see no signs of a Supreme Intelligence. Let it be granted that there are difficulties connected with the doctrine of the existence of a God,—as, to finite minds, difficulties there must be,—yet, are not the difficulties of the Atheistic doctrine far greater and more numer-

ous? But you spurn the Atheistic view: it is cold, unintelligible, and absurd; and you believe that there is a Being who created all these things, and who is Lord of all.

But it is in the storm that the wonders of the deep are most strikingly displayed; and to that the Psalmist, therefore, specially alludes. "For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof." Who, that has witnessed the astonishing phenomenon of a storm, is insensible to the impression—which it almost necessarily produces on the mind—of the power and majesty of nature's Lord? When the gentle breeze swells into a gale, and the lowering clouds darken the vast vault of heaven, and the electric fluid plays about the rigging of the ship, and the waves rise and toss themselves impetuously, and every yard of canvass that remains exposed is torn to pieces by the winds, and the sea breaks furiously over the vessel's sides, so that she labours till her timbers crack, and the whole structure seems as if it would break asunder;—then what views present themselves of the littleness of man, and of the greatness, majesty, and power of God! No scene in nature is so impressive and wonderful

as this. It speaks as with the voice of thunder, and says, The hand of the Omnipotent is here. Compared with the display of power which is exhibited in a storm at sea, all the indications of power exhibited by man, with all the forces, chemical and mechanical, which he can press into his service, are like the feeble efforts of an ant. And yet, familiarity with such scenes is calculated to produce indifference respecting them. But let the sailor never be unmindful of the fact that it is God that "commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the" mighty "waves;" and let him never fail, when the tempest howls around him, to acknowledge his entire dependence on the protecting care of Heaven. For then, though the storm be ever so furious, he will possess a calm and tranquil mind. His breast will be the seat of a "peace that passeth understanding." He will realise the truth of Isaiah's precious words,— "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." (Isaiah xxvi. 3.)

Your attention has been directed to these wonders; but how truly may it be said, "Lo! these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him! but the thunder of

His power who can understand?" "Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; neither can the number of His years be searched out." "He hath made the earth by His power; He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the winds out of His treasures." All nature, above, beneath, and around, is under His control, and, as with one accord, tells us of His wisdom and His power. If we would listen to them, His works, as well as His word, would teach us to adore Him. True philosophy agrees with revelation in leading us to the great Eternal Mind. It is science "falsely so called" which induces scepticism, and would persuade us to discard the sacred Scriptures. But men study the works of God, and speak of them with the most enthusiastic admiration, whilst, at the same time, they neglect the Being who created them. And some will even call this sentimentalism piety!—will imagine that the mere contemplation of nature, with the emotions it awakens, is

itself religion! But there can be no devotion where God is not acknowledged. It is one thing to admire His works, and another thing to reverence His name. "The admiration of the mere philosopher," says an eminent writer, "is akin to the emotions of the musical amateur, when he is fixed in ecstasy by the full harmony of an oratorio of Handel: he fancies himself devout; and yet, there is little if anything more than unwonted sensibility to the power of sound,—a sensibility which gives itself utterance when the entrancing harmony has died away upon the ear, rather in terms of rapture at the inimitable skill of the composer, than in the adoration of the majesty and grace of Him whom the composition professes to extol." *

* Dr. Wardlaw.

III.

THE Psalmist having spoken of the wonders which the sea presents, very graphically describes the state and conduct of mariners when exposed to danger:—"They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble," &c. How correctly this is stated I need not point out, my sailor-friends, to you. Your own experience is a sufficient comment on these words. You have often, perhaps, been placed in just such circumstances; and it may be that you will be placed in such circumstances again. Still you will allow me to make some observations to you here, which, I trust, will be worthy of your attention.

The mariner in the storm is often the subject of very great disquietude: "his soul is melted because of trouble." The winds roar, the sea is furious, the vessel is now upon the foaming billow, and now low between the mountain waves: the storm increases, danger is impending, and the lives of all on board, together with the safety of the ship, are in considerable jeopardy:—and can he be otherwise than

troubled? The man who does not tremble under circumstances of this kind, if such a man can anywhere be found, must have a heart of adamant. I have often admired the fortitude of the sailor in the storm, and almost wondered that he could be so calm; but sometimes even the very bravest yield, and even those who have perhaps boasted of their heroism will manifest the greatest dread. It is not always, indeed, those who make the loudest professions of their bravery, that prove the bravest in the hour of trial. Many a man who has boasted of his courage when no danger was at hand, has found that courage fail him when the danger came. The sailor needs courage as much or more than any man; but let him get the true courage,—the courage of the Christian, which neither shrinks from danger, nor makes the heart like flint. Let him be bold, but humble, remembering always where his true strength lies,—even in the Eternal God. It is a dangerous thing for any class of men to harden their hearts against fear. Yet this is a snare into which the mariner is often liable to fall. He will sometimes, in the midst of perils, assume an air of bold defiance, for the sake of boasting of his courage after-

wards, or in order to escape the laugh of his companions: but is this becoming? Is it wise and right? He knows it is not; and far better would it be for him, whilst he cultivates a manly and heroic spirit, to cultivate, at the same time, a spirit of humility; and, whilst he does not fear where no fear is, never to be ashamed to confess his weakness when danger is actually impending over him.

But, indeed, the consciousness of his insufficiency will, at one time or at another, be sure to come. However brave, heroic, or experienced, there are seasons when the mariner is not only filled with sorrow and distress, but is "at his wit's end," and knows not what to do. He is often a man of considerable skill; can foresee the coming of the storm; and, even in the severest gale, can manage his vessel with the greatest prudence; but, profound as may be his knowledge of the art of navigation, and admirably as he may be able to meet the fury of the tempest, there are occasions when, as the Psalmist says, he is "at his wit's end;" or, as the margin forcibly expresses it, "all his wisdom is swallowed up." Man is vain, and often boasts too much; but let him become a sailor, and let him be called to contend with the

boisterous ocean when it rages impetuously, and will not be quiet, and God will teach him, as He often does by other means as well, that he is comparatively of yesterday, and knows nothing. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory in his might. He cannot bind the winds, or check the fury of the storm. He possesses many noble powers, and can accomplish some things that are truly wonderful; for, though a fallen creature, he still occupies the loftiest rank in the scale of being on this transitory world, and is endowed with mental faculties of the highest order. But there is a limit to his skill. He is a finite being. All his wisdom is often swallowed up. He is frequently (in the midst of the difficulties that surround him) brought to such a stand, that his only remaining hope is in the merciful interference of a gracious God.

This has been specially the case with you, brave mariner. You remember the time, perhaps, when for several days the sky was overcast with darkening clouds, and no bright sun cheered you on your course; when you were unable to take your accustomed observations, and consequently lost your reckoning;

and when, driven by the winds within the vicinity of rocks and shoals, you were filled with apprehensions that your vessel would be dashed in pieces; and, at that moment—O, how fearful the suspense!—you felt, indeed, your insufficiency, and saw your need of special aid from heaven. Even the most skilful Captain is liable to such difficulties, and to experience all the disasters of a shipwreck; nor is it surely a dishonour to him if, when he has put forth all his efforts to prevent it, his ship has, notwithstanding, been cast upon the shore. The Christian mariner who has been placed in circumstances of this kind, and has only just escaped with life, will learn from them lessons of humility and gratitude. With the Patriarch of Uz, he will be ready to say, “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth:” or, with the Prophet Jonah, “I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed: salvation is of the Lord;” and in every future trial he will not fail to have recourse to humble prayer, the sheet-anchor of the sailor in the season of distress.

Prayer is a duty and a privilege at all times; but in the fearful storm it is peculiarly im-

portant. The mariner feels this, as the Psalmist beautifully observes (verse 28). In times of prosperity, and when no danger threatens, men too often forget their Maker, and prayer is consequently neglected and despised. But, when affliction comes, when peril is at hand, when death draws near, they become alarmed, and begin to call for help on God. This is the case, it is greatly to be feared, in very many instances, at least, with seamen; and though it were better for them to pray when the storm rages around them than not to pray at all, yet it is of the greatest moment that they should not put off the duty until then, but be at all times men of prayer. We could wish that every ship that ploughs the sea were consecrated as a house of prayer, in fair weather and in foul. And who, I would ask my sailor-friends, are the men that in the storm will pray with confidence, and whose prayers will be proved the most acceptable with God? They are those who habitually pray; and for this reason it is, that a man of prayer on board a ship is a blessing to that ship and all its crew. "Is there a praying man on board?" said a Captain once, when the storm beat furiously, and his bark was likely to be lost. "Is there

a praying man on board?" but, for awhile, no answer was returned. At length it was ascertained that there was one individual who had formerly been a Wesleyan Methodist, but who was now a wanderer from Christ's fold. "Can you pray?" said the Captain to him. "I could once, Sir," was the reply; "but I have left off praying." "Try again," said the Captain; and the crew knelt down, whilst the poor backslider tried to pray,—and did pray, fervently, powerfully, and successfully; for the storm subsided, and the vessel was preserved.

Yes, the man of prayer—of constant and habitual prayer—has power with God. His are the prayers that will avail, if any will, in the time of peril and distress; for he possesses the *spirit* of prayer,—the spirit of adoption,—of child-like confidence in God. In the season of severest trial he can call God his Father; and, if he is a sailor, and is tossed upon the billows, and the tempest rages fearfully, and death appears inevitable, he will even then enjoy a calm and peaceful mind; for all the agitations of his breast will be composed by a voice within, saying to him, "Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God." Come, then, ye sailors, and make God your

friend. Learn to pray,—to pray believingly; and seek the Spirit of adoption, which will enable you to cry, Abba, Father. In the hour of peril you will then have confidence in God; and whether your prayers for temporal deliverance be answered or not, you will feel that you are safe within His mighty arms. Captains, I appeal to you. Do you pray? Have you prayer on board your vessels? Do you honour God when you have a fair wind, and when your canvass is full set, even to the top-mast sail? If you do not, how can you expect that He will hear you in the storm? It is of the first importance that you should establish Christian worship with your crews; and what can be more delightful than for a ship's company, when out at sea, to spend a portion of their time, especially on the Sabbath, in united prayer to Him who rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm? The influence of such services could not fail to be beneficial on the minds of all. They would probably check the fearful habit, into which so many sailors fall, of swearing and profanity; and they might be the means of leading some, of dissolute and wicked lives, to abandon sin, and seek the mercy offered in the Gospel. I rejoice to know

that in many vessels religious services are established. I have spent many a joyful Sabbath on board a ship. When crossing the Atlantic, I have witnessed, on the morning of the Lord's day, the greater part of the ship's company, all neatly clad, assembled on the quarter-deck, every one with a Bible and a Prayer-Book in his hands, to join with the passengers in the worship of the Lord of all. I have often ministered to the interesting group the word of everlasting life ; and at such moments I have felt as near to God and to the mercy-seat as when, under other circumstances, I have conducted the devotions of a large assembly in a Christian sanctuary in this highly favoured land.

I wish, then, to urge upon the sailor who may read these pages, the importance of Divine worship *at all seasons and under all circumstances*. He will cry unto God in his distress ; but let him not forget to pray when the wind is favourable and the sky above is bright. Then will he have boldness at the throne of grace when he needs the special aid of Heaven ; and then, even should shipwreck and a watery grave await him, he will safely land on the shores of immortality.

IV.

BUT frequently deliverance is granted. "He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."

The mariner's deliverance may be viewed in several different aspects; and, first, as an evidence of the efficacy of prayer. The storm subsides in answer to the sailor's fervent supplications. He who holds all nature at command is moved by the cries and entreaties of the sorrowful, to grant them aid. This is mysterious, we admit; but it is the doctrine of the sacred Scriptures, and it receives ample confirmation from the experience of mankind. Thousands of instances are on record which go to prove that prayer, even for temporal blessings, is frequently effectual. That it is invariably so, is not affirmed; but that it is so often, none but the sceptic will deny. The sceptic asks, "How is it possible?" and he points us to the fixed and settled laws by which all nature is upheld, and affirms that to imagine, for a moment, that prayer can

have any influence on the winds and waves, is irrational and absurd. And if we try to reason abstractedly on the subject, we confess that there is much connected with it that we cannot comprehend. But are we to believe nothing but what our weak minds can perfectly comprehend? If so, we must doubt even our own existence. Besides, it may be observed, that nature's laws are not the laws of fate, but laws which have been established by an Eternal Mind. He who denies this is virtually an Atheist. But if this position be admitted, then those laws are under the control of Him who made them; and, if He chooses, He can at any time suspend them. It is not necessary to suppose, however, that answers to prayer involve a suspension of the laws of nature. God may have many ways, and doubtless has, of answering the fervent supplications of His creatures, whilst, at the same time, the harmony of nature remains unbroken; and what if we cannot understand the mode of His operations?—(we, who know so little of the connexion between cause and effect, that, when we attempt to reason about it, we soon find ourselves lost as in an endless labyrinth,)—shall we, therefore, call in question the facts which His wisdom

has revealed? It were presumptuous and absurd to do so; and the Christian will ever shrink from such a course. In discussions of this kind, "a child or an idiot may start objections, which not all the philosophy of the wise of this world will be able to explain. But it is not thus that the Christian builds his eternal hopes. Convinced how easy it is for the mind to lose itself amid these bewildering speculations, he the more eagerly clings to the wisdom derived from the written word of revelation; and, when that is silent, to those moral impressions and convictions which, from the universality of their diffusion through the well-principled portion of the human race,—from the uniformity of the feelings they inculcate, and their beneficial effect upon society,—he reasonably conceives to be the inculcation of the Almighty Creator Himself. If these announce to him his duty, it is enough. How and why it is so, he trusts that a future day will explain,—when he shall find his reward among the pure in heart, to whom, and not to the learned in this world's wisdom, our blessed Saviour has promised that 'they shall see God.'"*

• Bishop Shuttleworth.

Now, Divine revelation teaches us that prayer is efficacious; and the instinctive feelings of our nature would lead us to the same conclusion. Who then would be so foolish as to neglect this duty, because he cannot comprehend the mode in which it is rendered beneficial? I appeal to the mariner, and I ask him, if he has not often proved the power of prayer? You remember, my friend, how, when the storm was raging furiously, and your vessel was in jeopardy, and you were ready to give up all for lost,—you remember how, in that solemn hour, you were led instinctively to call on God, and how, when you had prayed, the wind subsided, and the danger passed away; and would you now attribute this to chance, or fate, or the influence of mere secondary causes? Will you say that your prayers had nothing to do with it? and will you, on your next voyage, or in any future storm that you may encounter, fail to pray? No: you believe there is a Providence, and that that Providence upholds the world. On Him, therefore, you will venture to rely; and to Him, in every season of distress, you will make known your wants. Prayer is effectual with God. It is one of the instruments which He Himself has directed to be used by

man; and, through the merits of our great High Priest, who presents His own intercessions for His people in the holy place, an instrument which is frequently successful in securing for us the richest blessings.

But we may view the deliverance of the mariner as also illustrative of the power of God. We have spoken of the storm as illustrative of His power; but is it less conspicuous in the allaying of the storm? How remarkable is the subsidence of the tempest! Sometimes the raging of the wind will cease, almost in a moment, as when a noble war-horse, flying swiftly over the plain, obeys his rider's check, and stops on the very spot required. Can our minute philosophers explain this fact? Scientific men have recently been studying the law of storms, and they have made us acquainted with a few particulars respecting them that are exceedingly curious and valuable; but can they tell us *how* it is that the storm subsides, and is followed by a joyful calm? No more than they can tell us a thousand other things that we often wish to know. When we begin to reflect on the operations of nature, they appear truly astonishing. "It is by *not* thinking," as an eloquent writer observes, "that we cease to

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wonder at them." "We call that fire of the black thunder-cloud electricity, and lecture learnedly about it, and grind the like of it out of glass and silk; but *what* is it? What made it? Whence comes it? Whither goes it? Science has done much for us; but it is a poor science that would hide from us the great, deep, sacred infinitude of Nescience, whither we can never penetrate,—on which all science swims a mere superficial film. This world, after all our science and sciences, is still a miracle;—wonderful, inscrutable, magical, and more, to all who will *think* of it."

To what, then, are the operations of nature to be attributed?—to what the raising and the allaying of the tempest? There can be but one rational reply to this inquiry: To the agency of God. "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth," and to whom "the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers," that both raiseth up the stormy wind, and makes the storm a calm. "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto Thee? or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them." (Psalm lxxxix. 8, 9.) Let the mariner bear this in mind; and let him

never fail, when the tempest has subsided, and the winds have ceased to rage, to recognise the power of God, and to acknowledge the operations of His hand. To no mere secondary causes can any of the phenomena to which we have adverted be ascribed. Such causes are altogether insufficient to account for them. We must ascend higher, to that wise, powerful, and all-gracious Being, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things. Is it not surprising that any one should neglect to do this? "But there are those," says an eminent French writer, "who are struck with the glory of princes and conquerors that found the little empires of this earth; and they do not feel the omnipotence of that Hand which laid the foundations of the universe. They admire the skill and industry of workmen, who erect palaces which a storm may throw down; and they will not acknowledge wisdom in the arrangements of that infinitely more superb work which the revolutions of ages have respected, and must continue to respect, till He who made it shall will it to pass away. In vain, however, do they boast that they do not see God: it is because they seek Him in a heart that is depraved by its passions. But they have only to look out of themselves, and

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they will find Him everywhere. The whole earth will announce to them its Maker; and if they refuse still their consent, their own corrupted heart will be the only thing in the universe which does not proclaim the Author of its being."

But who is that Being whom the winds and seas obey? I would remind the *Christian* reader of these pages, that it is none other than his Lord and Saviour. He it was, who said to the waters of the Galilean lake, "Peace, be still," and was obeyed; and He it is who, now exalted to the right hand of God the Father, presides over all nature, and controls the destinies of men. "By Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Coloss. i. 16, 17.) His true and proper divinity is thus asserted, and His claim to the homage and allegiance of His creatures is affirmed. He whom the sea obeyed should surely be obeyed by man. There is something, too, in the fact, that the world's Redeemer is the Lord of nature, which is most encouraging.

How can the Christian mariner reflect upon it without pleasure? The recollection that the Being who redeemed him at the sacrifice of His own life, holds the winds and waves at His command, will animate him with confidence even in the storm, and inspire him with the highest hope. He will feel that in His hands he is safe from all real danger, for that should his vessel be submerged beneath the angry billows, his spirit will find rest in the haven of eternal peace. But if, on the other hand, his prayers are heard for deliverance from temporal calamity, he will exult with gratitude, and own the power of Christ.

And there is another aspect in which the mariner's deliverance may be viewed,—also adverted to in the psalm before us. It is a source of inexpressible delight and gladness. Those only who have been placed in circumstances of peril know what that ecstasy of feeling is which arises in the breast when the hour of danger is gone by. The soul is filled with unutterable peace; and in the mind of the Christian especially, there springs up, as in a moment, a sense of special obligation to that God who is emphatically called the "Preserver of men." Such is the joy often experienced by the mariner. Now

the tempest rages round him, and an awful death appears to be his certain doom; when, suddenly, the storm subsides, the sun's bright beams burst through the threatening clouds, and the raging sea is calm: and then—but how can we describe the deep emotions of his breast? He knows best himself what, at such a season, those emotions are.

And how great is the joy which he experiences, when, after a long and dangerous voyage, he at length arrives at his destined port! The first sight of land a-head fills all on board the vessel with activity and life. As you approach the shore, and the first grey outline of the coast becomes gradually clearer and yet clearer still, and the cliffs, and the green fields, and the dwellings, and the quay, present themselves successively to view, every individual in the ship is animated with delight, and all the storms you have encountered are presently forgotten. And when the port happens to be home—what then? Then there is joy above all joy, and every heart beats high with expectation, and the deep utterances of the soul will often be expressed by tears. And are there not other hearts that beat high too? Yes; there is the sailor's wife, or, it may be,

the mother of some sailor-boy. He has been long away from home; and many a stormy night has she sat listening to the howling blast, wondering how it fared with him. Perhaps she has heard that several vessels have been lost, but has not heard their names; and, for aught she knows, his may be among the number. But at length intelligence arrives that he is safe,—that his ship is just in sight; and O, how joyful is the news! I was acquainted with a sailor's wife some years ago, whose husband was the Captain of a ship, and had sailed from London for the northern seas. He was from home much longer than was expected, and no tidings were received respecting him for a considerable length of time. Several vessels that had gone on the same expedition before his, had returned, but reported nothing favourable concerning him. It was rumoured, indeed, that his ship was lost; and the ungenerous owner of it stopped the monthly payments, drawn by the families of the Captain and the crew. The deep distress of that sailor's wife may be better imagined than described. But she was a pious woman; and she would often gather her children together, and, kneeling down by their side, pray that God, if so

it pleased Him, would bring her husband home. God heard her prayers; for at length a letter was put into her hands, written by her husband, announcing that his ship was in the Thames; and then her joy was full, and she gratefully adored the Author of her mercies.

Such facts are probably of frequent occurrence, and are signal proofs of the goodness of that Providence which presides over the affairs of man. But temporal deliverances are the types of spiritual ones; and a still more joyful day than that on which he gains an earthly port awaits the Christian mariner,—the day in which “an entrance shall be ministered unto” him “abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” All deliverances here are succeeded by fresh dangers, and the sailor who escaped shipwreck yesterday must contend with storms again. But there is a haven of eternal peace; and if once he safely enter there, he will see no more the foaming billows, nor will he ever hear again the rolling thunder or the furious blast. It is important that we should learn to connect earthly things with heavenly; and I would urge upon the mariner ever to reflect, when

he returns home from a voyage, on that happier and brighter home for which, if he is a Christian, he is bound.

V.

EXTRAORDINARY manifestations of the mercy of God demand from man extraordinary gratitude. In consideration of such deliverances as those referred to, the writer of this psalm, therefore, says,—“O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!” And to such a sentiment who would not respond? If we receive special favours from the hands of our fellow-men, are we not expected to evince our gratitude?—and shall we receive not daily mercies only from the hands of God, but singular deliverances, and be unmindful of our obligations to obey and serve Him? And yet, in how many instances do seamen, in particular, neglect to render unto God His due! It is truly lamentable to witness some of the scenes

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which present themselves in many of our foreign ports especially, and not unfrequently in the towns which are situated on our own fair coast. Hundreds of sailors may be seen, some of whom have but just escaped the fury of the storm, and, perhaps, a watery grave, rioting in sin, wallowing in intemperance, and daringly insulting the Author of their being; and among these will probably be found youths who have enjoyed the advantages of religious training, and whose parents have endeavoured to lead their minds to God. I have witnessed such scenes, until I have been filled with grief and sadness. If indeed they were exhibited only by foreigners, who know not God,—by the idolatrous Chinese, or the ignorant Lascar,—they would but awaken pity in one's breast; but when we see our own intelligent and enlightened countrymen, British sailors, pursuing such a course, it is unspeakably distressing. Now, it may be that this address will fall into the hands of some hitherto profligate and wicked sailor; and most earnestly would I urge on him, and on every one who may read these pages, his obligations to that God who has perhaps often delivered him from impending death. You are bound to acknowledge with a grateful heart *the goodness of God's providence;*

and that duty I would press upon your calm consideration.

Wherein does it consist? Is gratitude the mere utterance of certain forms of expression? Would some song of thankfulness be a sufficient offering to present to God by the rescued mariner, which, as the strains died away on the air, should presently be forgotten? Gratitude has its seat in the heart, and the truly grateful man will manifest the disposition in some more practical and decided manner. Do you ask what it is that God demands of you in proof of your thankfulness to Him for His protecting care? I will try to answer your inquiry.

He demands of you the abandonment of sin. For a man to talk of gratitude to God, whilst he is transgressing His commandments, is as vain as for a subject to profess attachment to his Sovereign, who is at the same time trying to subvert his government. The lips that offer praise to God must needs be clean,—the hands that offer sacrifice must be unstained. “Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes,” is the command: “cease to do evil; learn to do well.” And the requirement is a just one, and can never be relinquished. God is a holy Being, and will not so much as listen to the

man that violates His righteous law. Are you addicted to swearing, to intemperance, to Sabbath-breaking, to dishonesty? These, and all other vices, you must at once break off by true repentance; and, prodigals as you are, return with weeping to your Father's house. Can you think of continuing longer in an attitude of rebellion against that Being, whose wonders you have witnessed on the mighty deep,—who heard your cry in the season of distress, and who delivered you from the peril to which you were exposed? If you do, His judgments, though frequently averted, may speedily overtake you. “He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” (Proverbs xxix. 1.) Many a profligate sailor has been swept from the deck of his ship into the yawning sea, and many a one has been dashed upon the rocks a lifeless corpse; and should not such occurrences, with which almost every seaman is acquainted, prove admonitory to those who still survive? A course of impenitence and sin will, in the end, terminate with the destruction, not only of the body, but of the immortal spirit; and of all disasters that can happen, the loss of the soul is the most fearful and appalling. It is a calamity

when a beautiful vessel, admirably built and well-constructed,—the pride of her owners, and the delight of the beholder,—is wrecked upon an iron coast, and utterly destroyed; but what is this in comparison with the wreck of a human soul, formed by the hand of God, and made to bear and to reflect His image? This is a catastrophe that might cause all nature to clothe itself in sackcloth, but a catastrophe to which every impenitent man is constantly exposed. Harken, then, to the voice of instruction: “Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.” (Ezekiel xviii. 30.)

God demands of you the acceptance of His Son.—“This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” (John vi. 29.) Herein true gratitude begins. No man is properly sensible of his obligations to the Most High for temporal deliverances, who is not sensible of his obligations to Him for the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and no man can offer acceptable praise to God for providential mercies, who has not learnt to praise Him for the gift of His beloved Son. If, then, you would respond to the language of the Psalmist, you must cordially and thankfully

embrace that Saviour whom the Gospel exhibits as the only sacrifice for sin. You can give no stronger proof of gratitude to God than by first renouncing sin, and then, by humble faith, casting yourselves on the merits of your Great High Priest. It is to Him, I would again remind you, that, if you have been delivered from the dreadful storm, you owe your rescue. He it was that stilled the tempest, and that calmed the raging sea; and He it is, and only He, that has effected for you a still greater rescue,—a rescue from that sea of fire which never shall be quenched. And now He waits to calm the passions of your breast, to whisper peace within the soul, to take away your guilty fears, and to fill your hearts with love. If you come to Him, He will pardon your transgressions, for He bore your sins “in His own body on the tree:” “the chastisement of your peace was upon Him; and with His stripes” you may be “healed.” Let me commend to you THE SAILOR'S FRIEND. Such is Christ; and, if you secure His favour, He will be with you in every future storm. His presence will support you when every other source of comfort fails. When home is distant, and the night is dark, and you are out upon the watch, and danger suddenly draws near,

you will hear His Spirit's voice,—“It is I, be not afraid.” Is it not desirable to have at all times a friend on whose skill you can perfectly rely? But the skill of the most skilful will sometimes fail; and it is only in the Son of God that man can find a constant source of power. He only can safely guide you across the boisterous sea of life, and enable you to cast your anchor in the haven of eternal rest. “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and *this life is in His Son.*” (1 John v. 11.)

But the inquiry may be made by some, and we should rejoice were many of you earnestly to ask, “How are we to come to Christ? what is the nature of that faith in Him, by which we must be saved?” I will attempt to answer this important question. To believe in Christ is not an arduous thing. Preparatory to the act of faith, by which the merits of the Redeemer are appropriated by the sinner, there must be a truly penitent state of mind, and a cordial acquiescence in the plan of salvation unfolded in the Gospel; and then, all that is required is the entire trust of the soul in the sacrificial death of Christ for pardon. The moment that such trust is exercised, the guilt of sin is cancelled, and the believer filled with

peace. The blood of the atonement is sprinkled on his conscience, and the Holy Spirit seals forgiveness on his heart. You have, perhaps, seen a man who had fallen from your ship, struggling with the waves until his strength was all but gone; when, suddenly, a piece of timber has come near him, or a rope has been thrown to him by his comrades from the vessel. What has he done? Has he asked the question, "Will this piece of timber bear me up?" or, "Will the rope sustain me, if I catch it?" He has never thought of that. He has thrown himself at once upon the only means within his reach for help. He has trusted in the piece of timber, or the rope; (not perhaps without some degree of fear at first, seeing that his life was then at stake;) and he has proved that his confidence was not misplaced. We advance this illustration, though by no means new, because we think that you will at once perceive its meaning. You are exposed to danger. The wrath of God impends above your head. You are feeble, helpless, and undone. The waves of sorrow roll around you; and, in a moment, you may sink beneath their weight. But, O, a Saviour is provided! Mercy is offered you through a gracious Mediator. The

rope is out: cling to it. Ask not if you may: ask not if you can: ask not if it is strong enough to bear you up. Make the effort. Venture. Throw yourself, with all your guilt and sinfulness, upon the proffered means of help. Wait not for any other. No other can be found. You must be saved by this means, or you must perish. This is that act of faith which will secure your peace with God: yet, not because it possesses merit in itself, but because it takes firm hold on the merit of the Son of God.

But, this faith exercised, God then demands of you the living sacrifice of yourselves:—"I beseech you therefore, brethren," says the Apostle Paul, "by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. xii. 1.) That life which has been preserved by the special interposition of a gracious Providence, is surely God's property, and should be unreservedly yielded up to Him. A truly grateful mind will spontaneously acknowledge this. The first consideration of a man rescued from impending death, whose heart is not insensible to proper feelings, will doubtless be,—
"My life is spared, and that life belongs to
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God." And, perhaps, it is for the purpose of awakening such emotions in the breast, that God sometimes places men in circumstances of peril,—that they may see and acknowledge His goodness in their deliverance. He claims us as His property on many grounds. He has made us; and we are *therefore* His. He has redeemed us; and for this reason, also, we are His. But, by every act of special care manifested towards us, He makes a special claim upon our services and affections. Have you been rescued from the perils of the deep? God by that very rescue says, "My son, give me thine heart." And is this request too great? You cannot think so. Henceforth you are bound to become the faithful servant of your Great Deliverer,—to fear Him, to honour Him, to obey Him. You are not only to abandon sin, and to accept of Christ as the Saviour of mankind; but you are to consecrate your lives to the work of glorifying Him who has conferred upon you such distinguished benefits.

The sailor has frequently opportunities of glorifying God, which other men do not possess. He visits distant lands, and comes in contact with multitudes of foreigners. Some of these are Heathens,—ignorant, debased, and perhaps

as savage as the wild beasts that roam the desert or the forest. He may not be able to converse with them; for they speak a barbarous tongue: but he can show them kindness; he can exhibit to them a pattern of Christian forbearance; and, should he subsequently become acquainted with their language, as he often does, he can tell them of the world's Redeemer, and point them to the Cross. If all our sailors who have visited the South-Sea Islands had been pious men, should we have heard of so many of those calamitous events which have occurred upon their shores? or would the white man's name have become so odious in the estimation of the natives? It is possible for the mariner to be the instrument of an immense amount of mischief on a foreign shore; but it is also possible for him to accomplish an immense amount of good. He may become the pioneer of Christian Missionaries, or himself an herald of the Cross of Christ; and perhaps the evangelization of the world may, to some extent, depend on the spread of practical religion among British seamen. "Yield yourselves to God," then, ye mariners of England; and He will honour you, and bless you, and you shall carry the glad tidings of redemption

to nations that are perishing for lack of knowledge.

There is, further, a specific duty intimated in the passage to which I have directed your attention :—" Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders." How pleasing it is to see the sailor, when on shore, attending the ordinances of the Christian sanctuary! This is a duty which, whenever practicable, whether in his own land or in a distant one, he should on no account neglect. And, if he has been saved from shipwreck, or if his voyage has been attended with some signal token of God's goodness, what were more becoming and delightful than for him and his companions to present their thanksgivings in some Christian congregation, by a formal notice handed to the Minister? Thus did the crew of a little vessel which, a few years ago, took fire on the southern coast of Africa. Having to land by means of a boat, and having reached an English town, they appeared one Sabbath morning in the house of God, and there publicly acknowledged the goodness of that Providence which had so graciously interposed on their behalf. And, in some of our seaport-towns, this practice is not

unfrequently adopted. Let it be encouraged by all means. Let the thanksgivings of the grateful sailor frequently ascend to God, as holy incense; and let "the congregation of the people" join in ascribing unto Him blessing and honour, and glory, and power, for His wonderful works unto the children of men.

And, in concluding these remarks, I would add, that it is important and desirable that our seamen should connect themselves with some one section of the Christian church. Church communion is valuable to every class of men, and it is not less so to the sailor than to others. He is often deprived of the privilege of uniting in the social means of grace, and of commemorating the Redeemer's death in the ordinance of the Eucharist: but for this reason it is the more requisite that he should avail himself of the privilege *when it is afforded*; and all the sweeter and more delightful will it prove to him, even as drink to a thirsty traveller, and as food to the hungry and the faint. And, when tossed upon the billows, he will derive advantages from membership with the church; for his Christian brethren will remember him in their prayers, and bear him specially before the throne of grace. For however distantly

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the members of Christian churches are separated, —though mountains rise between them, and seas and oceans roll,—there is a holy bond by which they are united, and often will their spirits meet in sacred fellowship with God. And then if the pious sailor, who is united to the church, has but one companion with him in the ship who is also joined to Christ, they two will form a little church themselves, and the Redeemer will be present with them when together they approach His throne ; and many a happy hour will they enjoy in social prayer, when others, perhaps, are filled with anxious fears. It will be a joyful day for that class of men whom I address, when by hundreds and by thousands they shall unite themselves to Christ and to His church. Such songs of praise will then ascend from sailors' lips and hearts, as have never yet been heard,—songs which shall be borne across the main on every breeze, and shall be echoed back from every ship in which a pious seaman sails. And shall that day not come? It shall: for to Zion it is said, "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee;"—a prediction which appears to intimate that the multitudes who go down to the sea in ships shall ultimately swell the number of

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the faithful, and be united to the church redeemed and saved by Christ. May it speedily arrive! and, meanwhile,—for delay is dangerous in this case,—let the mariner who reads these pages, and who is not a member of the Christian church, at once attach himself thereto, and thus give one of the strongest proofs he can of his gratitude to God for mercies past, and of his determination to be henceforth His faithful and devoted servant.

APPENDIX.

THE Wesleyan Seamen's Missionary Society, referred to in the preface, has now been established upwards of seven years. It supports a Minister, appointed by the Wesleyan Conference, a Visiter, and a Travelling Agent, and is under the direction of a Committee of gentlemen whose names are a guarantee for its effective management. It has already been favoured with considerable success. Numbers of sailors have, through its instrumentality, been brought under religious influence; and

not a few, it is believed, have sought and found the pearl of great price. The following is an extract from the last Report of the Committee, which the author of this address has recently had the pleasure of perusing. He would most earnestly commend the Society, which is supported by voluntary subscription, to the attention of the sailor's friend. It will be seen that it is the object of the Society to extend its operations in other places, both at home and abroad:—

“Your Committee are encouraged to believe, that at no distant period, the long-cherished wish of the founders of this institution will be realised,—that to foreign as well as English ports, its benefits will be extended. To *this* the Society is pledged; that when the tree has taken deeper root at home, its branches shall spread to other lands, to afford their shade and shelter to our seamen in foreign ports. Your Committee feel that their great and ultimate object will not be attained until the sailor finds an agent of this Society awaiting his arrival, and ready, as a friend, to give him counsel, and offer to him the blessings of salvation, in whatever port he may enter. Already are there openings abroad, even where the

native population are either Mohammedan or Popish, for the establishment of such an agency as this Society would employ ; and in such ports it would, while benefiting our seamen, confer blessings on the inhabitants, and on the English residents, who would gladly assist in its support. The indirect influence, at least, of our holy religion might then be exerted, where a Mission to the native population would not be allowed. How desirable (in the present state of religion in Europe, especially) that in every Continental port a Wesleyan Seamen's Missionary should reside !”



